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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 001256

SIPDIS

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GENEVA FOR PLYNCH
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/09/2015

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SUBJECT: NEPAL THINKING AGAIN ABOUT BHUTANESE REFUGEES

REF: KATHMANDU 01028

Classified By: Charge Elisabeth Millard. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Restarting the Bhutanese Refugee Discussion

[¶1.](#) (C) UNHCR Resident Representative Abraham Abraham reported to us a conversation he had with Nepal Foreign Secretary Acharya on June 7 to press the issue of Bhutanese

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refugees in Nepal. Acharya said the government of Bhutan must start implementing their agreement to take back refugees. Acharya said that if Bhutan started to take back category 1, 3, and 4 refugees from the verified camp, then Nepal could consider a "technical pause" to look at other possibilities, including third country resettlement options for the remaining refugees. (Note: Nine Bhutanese refugees from various camps visited the Embassy on June 2 to press for the option of third country resettlement. End note.)

[¶2.](#) (C) On June 8, Charge spoke to Acharya who stated that he was informally floating this proposal and that His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMGN) might consider if put forth by the international community.

[¶3.](#) (C) On June 9 FM Pandey reiterated that Bhutan needed to implement the agreement before Nepal would agree to discussing third country resettlement. The Charge suggested a proposal along the lines Acharya had raised: repatriation of those agreed upon in the verified camp, followed by a "technical pause" where all interested parties could look at a durable solution that would include third country resettlement. Pandey agreed that the plan had merit and was worth exploring. He told the Charge that the Bhutanese Foreign Minister had requested a meeting with King Gyanendra in Doha. Pandey had demurred, but left open the possibility of himself meeting the Bhutanese FonMin, if requested.

Re-Registration of Bhutanese Refugees

[¶4.](#) (C) The Charge also pressed the Foreign Minister to make sure that the information campaign for UNHCR's profiling exercise could take place in July so the effort could begin in August, as discussed in May with the PRM -led delegation (reftel). Pandey indicated he understood the importance of the exercise.

Comment

[¶5.](#) (C) Acharya's proposal is a version of the idea put forth by A/S Dewey in October, although HMGN is talking about the return of category 1, 3 and 4 refugees, not just category 1. This is the first indication we have had from HMGN since February 1 on its thinking on the thorny question of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal.

MILLARD